

Jesus in The Quran

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INTRODUCTION

JESUS IS A UNIQUE FIGURE IN HUMAN HISTORY. His words and deeds inspire many, and his life continues to fascinate and raise questions. So, it comes as no surprise that The Quran, the Muslim Scripture, has a lot to say about Jesus and his mother. The Quran tells the story of the conception and birth of Jesus and the difficulty Mary went through; it affirms Jesus' many miracles, summarizes his mission and call to God, refers to and praises the disciples, discusses the plot to kill Jesus and his ascension, and alludes to his expected second coming. In fact, Jesus and his mother, Mary, are two of the main figures in The Quran, presented as examples for all to follow.

To introduce the reader to *Jesus in the Quran*, relevant verses have been collected without neglect of context. Then several translations were consulted, mainly *The Noble Quran* by Hilali & Khan, and *The Quran* by Saheeh International, but also Yusuf Ali, Pickthal, and Shakir. Then, several Arabic commentaries on the Quran helped revise the translation to provide better understanding of the verses and a smoother translation from the original

Arabic. These commentaries are the source of what is in brackets within the translation. Finally and where necessary, footnotes were added for further clarification.

The reader will find the titles of the chapters of the Quran in bold, followed by the verses. The chapters of the Quran are not arranged chronologically, so the Quran does not read like a history book. Rather, many events are repeated in various chapters in the Quran for their morals and lessons, or to affirm a point or bring a new one to light. Also, verses only relevant to Jesus have been collected, so the reader might feel disconnected from the chapter. If so, we recommend reading the whole chapter for the full meaning.

CHAPTER 2 THE COW¹

87. And indeed, We gave Moses the Book and sent after him a series of messengers. And We gave Jesus, the son of Mary, clear signs and supported him with the Pure Spirit (Angel Gabriel). But isn't it that whenever a messenger came to you (O children of Israel) with what you did not like, you grew arrogant? And so some you disbelieved and some you killed.
88. And they say, "Our hearts are wrapped (preventing us from understanding what you are calling us to)." Rather, God has cursed them for their rejection (of the truth), so little do they believe.²

¹ The name of this chapter is derived from a story in verses 2:67-73, involving Moses, peace be upon him, and the Israelites.

² They claim they do not understand God's revelation and that is why they don't follow it, but they do understand it. The reason they do not believe is their rejection of the truth, which earned them God's anger, and so He put a barrier between the truth and them. The consequence of rejecting the truth is losing the ability to recognize it or to reach it later.

89. And when a Book from God came to them confirming what they have, and before that they used to pray for victory over those who disbelieved, then when what they recognized (to be the truth) came to them, they disbelieved in it. So let the curse of God be on the disbelievers.³
90. Miserable is the price for which they have sold themselves, that they would disbelieve in what God has revealed out of envy that God would give from His favor to whom He wills of His servants. So they brought on themselves anger upon anger. And there is a humiliating punishment for the disbelievers.
91. And when it is said to them, "Believe in what God has revealed," they say, "We (only) believe in what was revealed to us." And they disbelieve in what came after it, although it is the truth confirming what is with them. Say, "Why then have you killed the prophets of God (that were sent to you) before, if you indeed are believers?"



³ The verse refers to what the Israelites used to say to the polytheistic Arabs before Islam. Whenever they used to quarrel with them, the Israelites would threaten the Arabs that the coming of the last prophet is near, and when he comes, the Israelites will conquer the Arabs with him. But when the last prophet turned to be an Arab, which the Israelites did not expect, they rejected him though they knew that he was the promised one they were waiting for.

130. And who turns away from the religion of Abraham except one who demeans himself. And indeed, We chose him in this world, and he is among the righteous in the Hereafter.
131. When his Lord said to him, "Submit⁴," he said, "I have submitted to the Lord of the worlds."
132. And Abraham commanded this to his sons and (so did) Jacob, (saying), "O my sons, God has chosen the religion for you, so do not die except as Muslims."
133. Or were you present when death approached Jacob, when he said to his sons, "What will you worship after me?" They said, "We will worship your God and the God of your fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac, One God, and we are Muslims (in submission) to Him."
134. That was a nation that has passed away. They will receive what they have earned, and you will receive what you have earned. And you will not be asked about what they used to do.⁵

⁴ The Arabic word here is "*aslam*," a command to accept Islam. Islam is the submission to the will of God. A Muslim is one who submits to God's will.

⁵ That is, the righteousness of your forefathers will not help you if you are wicked, and their wickedness will not harm you if you are righteous. Each will receive the fruit of what they sow.